

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are pending in the Application.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3 and 5-7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Palmer et al. [U.S. Patent No. 6,505,773]; claims 2 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Palmer et al. in view of Thaxton et al. [U.S. Patent No. 6,691,915]; claims 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thaxton et al.; and claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thaxton et al. in view of Palmer et al.

Palmer et al. has a filing date of April 3, 1998 and an issue date of January 14, 2003.

Thaxton et al. has a filing date of November 16, 1998 and an issue date of February 17, 2004.

In contrast, the instant Application has an effective filing date of February 20, 1996 and, therefore, neither Palmer et al. nor Thaxton et al. are prior art. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections.

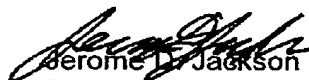
Applicant awaits another non-final Office Action¹ or a Notice of Allowance.

If there are any other fees required for entry of this amendment, or for any other reason, please charge such fees to the undersigned attorney's Deposit Account

No. 10-0077

If the Examiner has any questions about this amendment, applicant's representative would appreciate discussing this amendment with the Examiner. Applicant's representative, Jerome Jackson, can be reached at 703-684-4840.

Respectfully submitted,


Jerome D. Jackson
Reg. No. 33,186

Jackson Patent Law Office
211 N. Union Street, Suite 100

DATED: **31 MAR 2006**

1. "Under present practice, second or any subsequent actions on the merits shall be final, except where the examiner introduces a new ground of rejection that is neither necessitated by applicant's amendment of the claims nor based on information submitted in an information disclosure statement filed during the period set forth in 37 CFR 1.97(c) . . ." MPEP 706.07(a).

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Telephone 703-684-4840

Facsimile 703-995-0318